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DIE JÜDISCHE SCHRIFTGELEHRSAMKEIT ZUR ZEIT JESU. Von OSCAR HOLTZMANN. Giessen: Ricker, 1901. Pp. 32. M. 0.70. ("Vorträge der Theologischen Konferenz zu Giessen," 17. Folge.)

THE quality of this brochure stands in inverse ratio to its quantity. As the rabbis would say, it is *מעט בכמות*, "insignificant in extent," but *רב באיכות*, "great in content." It counts only thirty-two small pages. But the subject is treated exhaustively. In a delightful manner the true character and function of the rabbis and their teachings are presented, as far as the days of Jesus are concerned. The author, in order to do justice to the much-maligned rabbinical schools, had to expose the common prejudices according to which dry formalism and literalism leading to hypocrisy and presumptuousness are the distinguishing traits of Jewish rabbinical religiosity. He does not hesitate to style this picture, popular though it is, a caricature. He shows that the scribes and teachers were the successors of the prophet, and as such the agents of progress, making for a moral interpretation of religious implications. He brings out in clear relief the opposition of the synagogue to the temple, an opposition foreshadowed, indeed, in the antithesis of prophet and priest in the Old Testament canon. He admits that Jesus employed in his interpretations largely the methods in vogue in the exegetical schools of the rabbis, and eminently suggestive is his observation that the attention paid by the rabbinical scheme to the "little and petty" things affected beneficially the style of the Master's sermons, in which, also, the common, everyday experiences are dignified and become tremendous occasions for instruction.

On the whole, the picture drawn in this discourse must be said to be true to life, though greater concessions are made to the old misapprehensions of the rabbis' ambitions and attitudes than the sources warrant. It is true Holtzmann would impute to the class and excuse as professional care for the professional dignity the faults attributed to the learned men in the New Testament records, allowing that individuals in the class may have risen above these limitations. This view is certainly ingenious, and betrays the desire of the author to be scrupulously impartial and fair. Still, we believe, had he made larger use than he has of the rabbinical sources, he would have modified seriously even this qualified restatement of the common mistrust and misjudgment of the character of the rabbis as a class (*ein Stand*). The number of those among them that merited the censure which the New Testament writers have chronicled was by no means large. Talmudi-

cal passages abound in which pride and presumption on the part of the teachers are severely condemned ("Sôta," 5*a* and 5*b*). The Pharisee as drawn in the New Testament is modeled after one or two of the classes of Pharisees enumerated in the Talmud ("Sôta," 20*a*, 22*a*, 22*b*, and "Tôsaphôth," *ad locum*). The true Pharisee is he who serves God from love without expectation of reward. Nor was hypocrisy condoned. The most striking of the many sayings condemnatory of outward piety without inward sanctification which might be quoted, is found in Yômā, 72 : "The teacher whose interior does not correspond to his exterior is unworthy of the teacher's post." Stress was laid on sanctified and spiritual sentiment. Mere learning and scrupulosity were not deemed sufficient. "He who possesses learning but is without true fear of the Lord is like a treasurer to whom were delivered the keys to the inner door, but not those opening the outer. How can he get access to the treasure?" ("Šabbath," 31*a*.)

Professor Holtzmann has overlooked a vital factor, the double character of rabbinical exegesis. On the one hand, it is rigidly legalistic (halakhic). In the legalistic discussions and decisions the lawyer's temper predominates. To it applies the description of rabbinical religiosity as primarily concerned about fulfilling the letter of the law with the least possible inconvenience. The "law" is satisfied by the deed, and takes no cognizance of the motive. But, on the other hand, rabbinical exegesis is *haggadic*. And to the Haggadah one must go would one form a correct notion of the quality of the true "religion" of the synagogue. This "haggadic" preaching embraces much more than what Holtzmann is willing to concede. In addition to the speculations on eschatological themes, it was busy with the insistences that found articulations in the Sermon on the Mount. It is not so plain that Jesus did not preach as did one of the scribes, as tradition would have us believe. That statement must be construed in a sense other than that given it by Holtzmann. In fact, it is not true that the preachers in the synagogue on sabbath days and during religious service discoursed on legalistic perplexities. The "Haggadah" formed the main preoccupation of the preachers in the synagogues; exceptions to this were made only before the holidays, when the ritual practices incidental to the holy season would be explained. It is true, Hillel is reported to have also paid attention to a mass of things without intrinsic moral or religious worth. But had we of him and the other scribes no other reports but those contained in the haggadic midrashim, his and their memory and that of their activity would at

once assume a different aspect. Of Jesus' preaching we have only the account given by the gospels, and these, in our opinion, may only be compared with the *midrashim*. In calling attention to what we deem the limitations of Holtzmann's viewpoint, we would not for a moment be understood as undervaluing his popular contribution to one of the most difficult problems of New Testament times. He could not present the theme otherwise than from the point of view of a Christian. And from this fact arise differences which by no means detract from the value of his lecture. We hope that soon it will be translated into English. It would be in English, as it is in German, an urgent invitation to many to go over the ground once more and bring about the correction of many an unjust prejudice.

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THE CARPENTER PROPHET. A Life of Jesus Christ and a Discussion of His Ideals. By CHARLES WILLIAM PEARSON. Chicago: Stone, 1902. Pp. ix+288. \$1.50.

IN this volume Professor Pearson seems to think that he has discovered an original view of the Christ, and has entered upon a unique path of candor and honesty which none others have trod. He declares that, if all the text-books of systematic theology, and all the sermons based upon them, should be committed to a bonfire similar to that which consumed the books of "those who used curious arts" at Ephesus, the gain today would be relatively as great. And then, naively wishing to undermine no man's faith, he earnestly exhorts preachers to be honest and courageous in proclaiming views which harmonize with every known truth!

Professor Pearson's major premise is stated as follows: "The argument of this book is that all the superhuman powers attributed to Jesus, whether by the enthusiasm of disciples, by the imagination of poets, or by the self-interest of priests, are untrue."

This, so far as the book goes, is an assumption. There is no examination of the foundations of belief, no investigation of the historical sources, no philosophical discussion of the religious nature and needs of man, no apparent acquaintance with the work of specialists in biblical criticism, comparative religion, or any allied branch of study. Professor Pearson speaks his own *ipse dixit*. His imagination is fertile and its fruit abundant. Its virility may be seen, when he says, "In all probability Jesus was not a very good carpenter," and